

## GSWS 002: Gender & Society

Course Syllabus Summer Session II

June 29th-August 4th, 2023

Online, Tues/Thurs 12.00-3.50pm (Note: this time will be divided between asynchronous and synchronous activities)

Instructor:

Liz Rose (they/them)

Office Hours: Thursdays, 4.00-5.00 p.m. or by appointment

### Course Description

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies with a focus on the ways in which sex, gender, and sexuality mark our bodies, influence our perceptions of self and others, organize families and institutions, delimit opportunities for individuals and groups of people, and impact lived experiences. I will explore the ways in which sex, gender, and sexuality work with other markers of difference and social status such as race, class, nationality, and ability to further demarcate possibilities, freedoms, choices, and opportunities available to people. This course will cover the material and social constructions and productions of sex and gender, and the power dynamics that drive and structure gendered social orders.

### Course Objectives

- To gain an introductory understanding of the field of gender, sexuality, and women's studies
- To define, describe, and analyze different approaches to feminist thought
- To develop a basic knowledge of the gendered and racialized historical legacies of colonialism that structure society today
- To understand and be able to utilize feminism as a lens for self-reflection as well as an entry point for discussion and comprehension of academic texts, popular culture, music, films, and other media
- To become familiar with key texts and major scholars, activists, and performers who have contributed to the growing body of feminist knowledge

### Academic Accommodations

University of Pennsylvania, provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and been approved by the office of [Student Disabilities Services \(SDS\)](#). Please make an appointment to meet with one of your professors as soon as possible in order to discuss your accommodations and your needs.

If you have not yet contacted SDS, and would like to request accommodations or have questions, you can make an appointment by calling SDS 215.573.9235. The office is located in the [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) at Stouffer Commons 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300.

## Statement of commitment to inclusion

In support of the University of Pennsylvania's commitment to providing an equitable and safe experience for students whose birth name and/or legal name does not reflect their gender identity and/or gender expression, Penn accepts requests from any student seeking to use a preferred first and/or middle name in University records. A student's preferred name can and will be used where feasible in all University systems unless the student's birth name and/or legal name use is required by law or the student's preferred name use is for intent of misrepresentation.

Any student, including transgender, gender nonconforming, gender variant, and non-cisgender students who wish to designate a preferred name should fill out the Preferred Name Change Form. Students wishing to change a birth name and/or legal name to a preferred name must meet with one of the following designated University Life trans\* allies to discuss the scope and limitations of the preferred name request:

[Erin Cross, Director, LGBT Center, 215-898-5044](#)

[Rodney Robinson, Associate Director, Office of Student Affairs, 215-898-6533](#)

For additional Preferred Name Information: <https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/preferrednames.php>

### A Note on Pronouns

Pronouns are a common way to refer to someone in the third person instead of using a name (ie. she, he, they, zie, ze, ve--there are many!) and in our classroom, it is essential that I refer to each other by the names and pronouns that each person uses. Remember that pronouns may or may not specifically affirm someone's gender identity and you cannot tell what someone's pronouns are by their name or by looking at them.

You are not required to declare or share your pronouns. If you would prefer not to share, I will refer to you exclusively by name. You are welcome to include your pronouns on [your canvas profile](#) if you would like. If the pronouns you use change over the course of the semester, please let us know so I can be sure to use them.

Take care to take note of each other's pronouns. If you accidentally refer to someone by the wrong pronoun, quickly apologize, correct yourself, and move on with whatever you were saying.

## Communication Policy & Office Hours

I hope you take advantage of office hours to ask questions or chat about course materials--you don't have to have an academic issue to come to office hours, and I enjoy getting to know our students better. I will have a sign-up sheet after the first recitation session to visit our office hours at least once. Office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus.

Feel free to email us with any concerns or questions and I will do our best to get back to you in a timely fashion, typically within 48 hrs, Monday-Friday between 9am and 5pm eastern. Please note: if you email an hour before class, I will NOT get that message until after class.

## Academic Integrity

Since the University is an academic community, its fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. Essential to the success of this educational mission is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Every member of the University community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are also responsible for adhering to the principles and spirit of the following Code of Academic Integrity. Please familiarize yourself with it in its entirety: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>

## Course Requirements

Class Engagement and Participation: 30%

Discussion lead: 10 %

Autoethnography Midterm Paper: 20%

Final Term Paper Proposal: 10%

Final Term Paper: 30%

## Class Engagement & Participation

### Attendance

Class participation comprises a significant portion of your grade. Participation is integral in this class and I expect you to contribute thoughtfully to class discussion throughout the semester. Most importantly, to achieve course learning goals, you must attend and participate in classes. However, if you feel unwell or if you are under quarantine or in isolation because you have been exposed to Covid-19 or tested positive for it, you should not come to campus or attend in-person classes or activities. Any absences should be reported through the [Course Absence Report system](#). It is your responsibility to contact your TA or me to create a plan for participation and engagement in the course as soon as you are able to do so, and to make a plan to complete assignments when illness delays your completion. I recognize there can be a variety of extenuating circumstances that can prevent attendance. If you have additional concerns about attendance, or if there are unforeseen circumstances that change for you over the course of the semester, please be in touch with us as soon as possible so I can discuss possible accommodations.

### A note on wellness

Please be in touch if you need additional support or accommodations and remember that taking care of yourself and your loved ones should be your top priority. I am always happy to discuss options to find an appropriate balance for the semester. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

## Participation

In class, I encourage you to ask questions, make clarifications, and share your thoughts about the readings, recordings, and viewings. To prepare for class, take notes while you are reading, listening to, and watching course materials. Look up names or concepts that are unfamiliar to you. I recommend keeping a running list of keywords/terms that I encounter throughout the semester.

Ways to participate can include:

- asking & answering questions on lecture presentations and the previous week's protocol submissions during lectures and recitations
- participating in discussions by sharing opinions, asking questions, and responding to the readings and course materials
- sending your TA questions and comments in advance of recitation sessions

## Difficult Content & Building a Feminist Classroom

In a feminist classroom, first and foremost is the creation of a respectful environment for learning. In this class, I will be discussing some difficult topics. As your teachers, I will never do anything to intentionally shock or upset you; it is also our intention to create a challenging and intellectually stimulating environment, which will occasionally involve unpacking and processing difficult topics. Please be conscious of the fact that others may have (and will have!) opinions different from your own. If you are having difficulty dealing with a class discussion, reading, viewing, or listening excerpt, you may voice these concerns in class or you may discretely step out of class (in this event, please send me/your TA a quick email afterward).

If you are someone who is confident about speaking in class, try to be mindful of how much time you are occupying and try to invite others into the conversation. Also, be mindful of others' experiences when you speak. Avoid making assumptions about anyone's experience. Respect each others' names, gender pronouns, and expressed identities; no one is required to share information about their identities or experiences. Do not hesitate to approach us if you feel there are measures I can take to make the classroom a more hospitable space for you.

## A note on late work

Assignments are due on the date listed in the syllabus/on canvas. 1 week extensions will be considered under extenuating circumstances, with the exception of the final paper, for which I cannot grant extensions in order to get grades submitted on time. Improvement over the course of the semester will be taken into consideration for the final grade submission.

## Assignments

### Class Discussion Lead:

In this assignment you will help lay out key questions for the class discussion on the main work for a particular week. You can select any week from the syllabus to present, and we will meet with you the week before to discuss your thoughts and guide the presentation. You will

introduce the work, its author, and broader context, and will help the class develop an understanding of its key concerns. What shapes the representation of life in the work, and what impels it? Which motifs, symbols, and tropes should we be paying attention to, and how do these complement our existing interpretations? What key questions does the work raise, and what is at stake in the variety of answers available for each one? These are some of the questions your presentation will address. Students will sign up for presentation days during week 2.

### Autoethnography Midterm Paper

This midterm assignment is an opportunity to do a critical self-reflection in the context of issues and questions raised in class. You are encouraged to write your paper in the first person as part of an analysis of your own subject position in relation to course materials and topics. I will have a class dedicated to analyzing different types of autoethnographies. Your paper should be approximately 1200 words and should incorporate a critical reflection on at least 2 assigned readings. This assignment can also be creative. If you would prefer to submit creative prose or poetry, a musical selection, a podcast episode, or some other multimedia format, please be in touch with me.

### Final Term Paper

Throughout the semester, I will be practicing feminist analysis. The final term paper is an opportunity for you to choose your own “object” for analysis that is an appropriate length for an 8-10 page term paper. Examples include a film, song or album, current event, specific policy issue, etc. Additional details will be provided on the canvas assignment prompt. The paper proposal should include a tentative title, short outline, and introductory paragraph that presents a clear thesis statement.

| Points  | Grade |          |
|---------|-------|----------|
| 93-100  | A     | 76-79 C+ |
| 90-92   | A-    | 73-75 C  |
| 86-89   | B+    | 70-72 C- |
| 83-85   | B     | 66-69 D+ |
| 80-82 A | B-    | 60-65 D  |

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 Foundational Terms

- Emily Martin, “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles”
- Combahee River Statement
- Heath Fogg Davis, “Introduction: Sex Stickers,” *Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?*

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color”
- Susan Stryker, “(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies”

Key concepts: knowledge production; documentation as evidence; bodily truth  
sex; gender; intersectionality; transgender; nonbinary; gender nonconforming; intersex; queer

## **Week 2          Auto-Ethnography and Disability Justice**

- Christian, Barbara. “The Race For Theory”. *Cultural Critique*. Spring, 1987, No. 6.
- Audre Lorde, *Zami*, excerpt.
- Watch: Joshua Whitehead (minute 7:00-26:00):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZxJ2MmEu2M>
- Watch: Denice Frohman, “[First Kiss](#)”
- Listen: “[Fat Phobia & Diet Culture](#)” with Laverne Cox & Virgie Tovar
- Akira Drake Rodriguez, “Black Women at the Fore”
- Watch Jari Osborn’s [Picture This](#) (2017)
- Kaleigh Trace, excerpt from *Hot, Wet & Shaking: How I Learned to Talk About Sex*
- Ellen Samuels, “My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse”

Key concepts: autobiography; biomythography; autoethnography; oppositional knowledge;  
politics of recognition; transphobia; phenomenology; passing; gender expression; femininity

### **\*Auto-ethnography Midterm Due\***

## **Week 3          Transnational Feminisms**

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”
- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, “[Until Black Women are Free, None of Us will be Free](#)”
- Harsha Walia, “Dispossession, Deprivation, Displacement: Reframing the Global Migration Crisis”
- Felipe Rivas San Martín and Jorge Díaz, “No Body without Fiction: Towards a Representation of Sexual Dissidence in Chile”
- Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others”
- Watch: “Un violador en tu camino,” Collective Street Performance by La Tesis, Santiago de Chile, 2019.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSHUS2lehOY&t=11s>
- “Marielle Franco: Killed for defending the people of Rio”, Amnesty, 2018.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9Ofg0ObVvY>

Key concepts: Western feminism; Third World feminism; Hegemonic masculinity; migration; globalization; neoliberalism; World Bank; IMF; identity politics, intersectionality, assemblage, diaspora, fugitivity, travesti, post feminism; commodities; War on Terror; femonationalism

#### **Week 4      Settler Colonialism, Labor, and Nation-States**

- Arvin Mail, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections Between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy”
- [“Decolonizing Sex,”](#) *All My Relations Podcast* with Kim TallBear (13:33-25:00)
- Amrita Pande, “Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother-Worker”
- Loretta J. Ross, "Preface"
- Alexis Pauline Gumbs, "m/other ourselves: a Black queer feminist genealogy for radical mothering"
- Watch “1619 Project: Race” on Netflix

Key concepts: colonialism; postcolonialism; logics of coloniality; heteropatriarchy; decolonization; ethnographic refusal; sovereignty; indigenous epistemologies  
Surrogacy; reproductive labor; gestational labor; mother-worker; Black feminism, mothering, queerness, reproductive justice, institutional critique

**\*Final Term Paper Proposal Due\***

#### **Week 5      Institutional Politics, Surveillance, and Imperialism**

- Alex Vitale, “The End of Policing”
- Listen: “Serve & Protect: A History of Policing”
- Read excerpts from the [Penn & Slavery Project](#)
- Listen, [“The Case for PILOTs at Penn”](#) (on spotify and apple podcasts)
- Toby Beauchamp, “Flying Under the Radar”
- Cynthia Enloe, “Understanding Militarism, Militarization, and the Linkages with Globalization Using a Feminist Curiosity”
- Horim Yi and Timothy Gitzen, “Sex/Gender Insecurities: Trans Bodies and the South Korean Military”

Key concepts: militarism; TSA; homonationalism; surveillance; imperialism; conscription; militarized masculinity; medical model of sexuality; institutional responsibility; knowledge production; PILOTs

**\*Final Term Paper Due\***